

Remarks

Reconsideration of this application is requested.

Claims 1-3 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Brust et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,673,193.

Brust discloses the following in lines 27-43 of column 2:

"The invention comprises a system and method for processing a mailing consisting of a plurality of identical printed items to be grouped into bundles having an identical general address. Information as to bulk mailing centers (BMC) is accessed, which information provides an associated BMC for each group of zip codes, based generally on geographical proximity to a certain BMC. Information as to postal zones and rates to a particular zip code from the BMCs is also accessed, so that postal rates for each bundle can be calculated. Addressee information is provided to the system, including a general address having a zip code and particularized information for each addressee. The addresses should preferably be compatible with the particular bulk mailing procedures being used. Alternatively, the addresses can be screened for compatibility after being input into the system."

Brust discloses the following in lines 60-63 of column 3:

"Once the addressing and bundling operation is complete, the bundles may optionally be organized and loaded onto pallets (also known as containers) or into bags, which pallets or bags may then be transported and dropped at the BMCs."

Brust's invention deals with bulk mailing centers (BMC). The United States Postal Service defines a BMC as a highly mechanized mail processing plant that distributes standard mail and package services in piece and bulk form. The BMC are major postal facilities that also act as distribution hubs for transporting mail to destination delivery units. There are only 21 BMC in the United States and approximately 36,000 destination delivery units in the United States. The invention claimed by Applicant in claims 1-3 begins where Brust left off.

In Burst's invention, a mailer would have to deliver their mail to one of 21 BMC's that is located in the United States. Thus, it is probable that the mailer would have to travel a great distance to deliver their mail to the closest BMC. In Applicant's claimed invention, the mailer would identify eligible DDU USPS postal facility where the mailer may drop off their mail for mailing. This postal facility would be much closer to the mailer than the closest BMC facility. Thus, the mailer would not have to travel as far to deposit their mail with the U.S. Postal Service. Hence, an advantage of Applicant's claimed invention is that a mailer would save time and money by delivering their mail to an eligible DDU.

Claims 4-14 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Burst, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,673,193) and further in view of Manduley, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,079,714).

Manduley discloses the following in lines 12-55 of column 4:

"After a mail piece leaves the counter and comparator 18, it will be transported to a scale 26 which is in electrical communication with the microcomputer 20. The scale should be of a type that is able to weigh a mail piece rapidly and accurately. An example of such a scale is shown and described in U.S. Pat. No. 4,778,018, which is assigned to the assignee of the instant patent application. After the weight is obtained, the weight is transmitted to the microcomputer 20 and the mail is then forwarded to a scanner 28. The latter will identify and ready the last line of the address block, which gives the city, state and zip code, and measure certain parameters of the mail piece such as print contrast, surface reflectivity, and print font style. The scanner 28 in combination with the microcomputer 20 will perform a number of functions. Firstly, the geographical distribution of the mail will be determined. This will allow the Post Office to be aware of which regional centers the mail is to be sent. The combination will also determine the accuracy of the zip or the zip + 4 addressing. The lettering used to address the mail piece will be determined, i.e. the type of font used. This is useful information to the Post Office since some OCR machines are more capable of reading one type of font as opposed to a different type. The readability of the mailing address will be determined based upon the contrast and reflectivity of the mail pieces. This information will be sent to the microcomputer and stored in memory. The mail pieces will then be passed on to the transport

controller whereby the mail pieces eventually will join the batch mail 12, being replaced in their original position. While such transporting is going on, certain activities are undertaken by microprocessor. The zip codes that are determined from the mail will be compared against the national zip + 4 data base and retrieved. If the zip code is not found, an indication as such is stored as undeliverable for bad zip code. In the alternative, one can compare the zip coded city and state to the written city and state address, and if there are any mismatches, it is recorded as being undeliverable. If the mail is pre-barcoded, the bar code is decoded and compared to the zip code. If there is a mismatch, again it is marked as undeliverable. If manifest mail is being processed, an accuracy analysis is made of the manifest key line."

Neither Burst nor Manduley, taken separately or together, discloses or anticipates step (a) of claim 1, namely, creating an entry point lookup file containing a plurality of identification codes, each of which identifies one eligible DDU USPS postal facility so as to allow the mailer to use one of the identification codes to identify the postal entry point where the mailer drops off the mail pieces for mailing.

Neither Burst nor Manduley, taken separately or together, discloses or anticipates steps b, c and d of claim 9. Steps b, c, and d read as follows:

- b) retrieving the addresses of the eligible DDU USPS postal facilities, wherein each address contains a ZIP code, a state, a city and a street;
- c) creating the plurality of identification codes, each identification code for one eligible DDU USPS postal facility based on the address thereof; and
- d) sorting the plurality of identification codes according to the state, the city and the street of the eligible DDU USPS postal facilities.

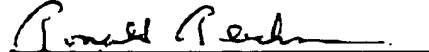
Neither Burst nor Manduley, taken separately or together, discloses or anticipates steps d, e, and i of claim 13, which read as follows:

- d) providing a USPS Drop Ship ZIP Carrier Route File which contains a plurality of local ZIP codes and carrier routes associated with the eligible DDU USPS postal facilities, a drop site letter key, and a drop site other key;

- e) retrieving from the USPS Drop Ship ZIP Carrier Route File the plurality of local ZIP codes and carrier routes eligible for DDU discounting, the drop site letter key, and the drop site other key;
- i) creating a plurality of identification codes, each for one retrieved address of the eligible USPS postal facilities so that when the mailer uses an identification code to identify the eligible USPS postal facility where the mailer drops off the mail pieces for mailing, the local ZIP codes and carrier routes associated with said eligible USPS postal facility are used to check against each of the mailing addresses to determine whether said mailing address are available for DDU discounting.

In view of the above, claims 1-14, are patentable. If the Examiner has any questions, would the Examiner please call the undersigned at the telephone number noted below.

Respectfully submitted,



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